

6. Articles (Park Publications) – Sand Dunes Breezes - Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve

Celebrate a New Wilderness - Patrick F. Myers, Interpretive Ranger

“I must leave it as beautiful as I found it.” —Sigurd Olson

Through dedicated hard work and inspired vision of countless individuals, the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 became reality, giving greater protection to much of the Sangre de Cristo range north of Blanca Peak.

Why wilderness? Why not allow logging, mining, hotels, mountain bikes, and all-terrain vehicles? According to the wilderness Act of 1964, “A wilderness ... is an area where the earth and the community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain ... retaining its primeval character and influence . . . which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions.” Reinhold Messner, the famous German mountaineer, was asked once why Europe has virtually no true wilderness left. He replied, “Because we had no people like Jonn Muir or Ansel Adams until it was too late.” In America we still have an opportunity to protect a few remaining untrammeled areas before it is “too late.” With the Sangres in particular, wilderness designation offers the unique chance to preserve an entire mountain range virtually intact, thereby protecting vital and complex ecosystems with diverse habitats.

Not all of the Sangres were included in this wilderness bill. Two 4-wheel drive corridors were left open over the Sangres: Hayden Pass in the north, and Medano Pass (accessible through the Monument). Most of the Blanca Peak massif, including the extremely difficult Blanca Peak 4-wheel road, was left out of wilderness designation. Check at the Visitors Center for specifics on the Sangre de Cristo area you wish to visit. Mechanized vehicles are not permitted in any wilderness area, including Great Sand Dunes, which became official wilderness in 1972.

The Great Sand Dunes are nestled against the rugged, spectacular Sangre de Cristo Mountains; their geology and wildlife are intimately intertwined. Yet it is the beauty of the two together which lingers in the mind and heart; the sun and shadow rhythms of the dunes rise to meet undulating lines of pine-forested hills, which in turn lift one’s eyes to shining snowfields interlaced upon the jagged crest of the Sangres. Those who love the dunes may rejoice that the neighboring Sangres will essentially remain “untouched,” which affirms a commitment for the continuance of leaving this magnificent region “as beautiful as we found it.”

6. Articles (Park Publications) – Peak Experiences - Summer, 1999, Lassen Volcanic National Park

What is Wilderness? - Narissa Willever, Interpretation Specialist

Ask a hundred people “What is wilderness” and you’ll get a hundred different answers. To a city dweller, it may be a quiet spot in a city park. To an experienced hiker, it may be walking where no other person has walked before. To most, wilderness is somewhere in between.

More than 150 years ago, nature writer and philosopher Henry David Thoreau said, “...in Wildness is the preservation of the World.” Perhaps Thoreau was telling us that raw, untamed wilderness is more than just features on a landscape; it connects the urbanized, modern human population we have become with the land we once lived closer to.

Three quarters of Lassen Volcanic National Park is designated wilderness. It contains all of the plants and most of the animal species known when the Europeans first settled here. Eagles roost in trees along icy rivers; bears forage for grasses and berries and feed on deer whose strength gave out during the long winter; bobcat pad silently across snowfields in search of snowshoe hare; and alpine meadows blaze in a glory of spring color.

These things are the heart of wilderness. Congress passed a law in 1964 establishing the National Wilderness Preservation System. The purpose of the Wilderness Act is to make sure that we “do not occupy and modify all areas within the United States leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition.” This law required federal land management agencies to set aside unspoiled areas and manage them so they are shaped primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of human’s work mostly unnoticeable.

Passing the law was, in a sense, a way of recognizing that Thoreau’s “Wildness” is fundamental to the human spirit. To extinguish the last vestiges of wildness from the country would be to extinguish something vital within us.

Today, the Wilderness System contains more than 100 million acres of Congressionally designated wilderness managed by four agencies: the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These special lands preserve natural ecosystems and maintain species diversity. They are natural laboratories for learning and scientific research to study the forces that maintain life without human intervention. And they offer unique recreational experiences and an opportunity for solitude and spiritual renewal for all Americans. Lassen volcanic National Park Wilderness was established by an act of congress in 1972. It contains 78,982 acres and is managed by the National Park Service so visitors have an opportunity to experience solitude in a natural setting and to explore the wonders of the South Cascades at a leisurely pace uninterrupted by roads, vehicles, structures, crowds, and other symbols of today’s world. Enjoy!

6. Articles (Park Publications) – Peak Experiences - Summer, 2001, Lassen Volcanic National Park

Discovering *Wildness* at Cinder Cone - Narissa Willever, Interpretation Specialist

“In Wildness is the preservation of the World.” —Henry David Thoreau

The hike to Cinder one is an unforgettable journey into the past, present, and future of a remarkable wilderness landscape.

At the top of Cinder Cone, the wild rustles over terrain as strange and still as the surface of Mars. Seven hundred feet below, Lassen’s wilderness stretches in a varied tapestry of rippling dunes, rugged lava beds, and forests of whispering pines.

In the timeless silence, you can imagine wagons creaking by—ghosts of pioneers who traveled the Nobles Emigrant Trail in the 1850s. You can almost smell the reek of brimstone and see the fiery convulsions that produced Cinder Cone over 300 years ago.

Lassen Volcanic National Park Wilderness was established by Congress in 1972. It contains three quarters of the Park and is managed to give visitors an opportunity to experience solitude in a natural setting.

The Cinder Cone area provides wilderness access for everyone from families looking for a morning hike to backcountry adventurers seeking deep solitude.

Protecting and Preserving

One of the greatest challenges of managing wilderness is balancing visitor enjoyment with the need to protect and preserve the land, living things, history, and values embodied by wilderness.

Last October, five motorcyclists covered the fragile Painted Dunes with ruts. Even after winter snows, the landscape is still marred. Off-trail tracks in the Cinder Cone area—including footprints—leave scars that can last for years.

Lassen needs your help to prevent tragedies like this in the future. To protect and preserve your park:

- Stay on designated trails.
- Know park rules.
- Report any transgressions or suspicious behavior to rangers.

For Today and Tomorrow

In recognition of the importance of wilderness, Lassen’s new General Management Plan calls for the expansion of the Park’s designated wilderness by approximately 25,000 acres.

We believe that wilderness ties us to our history, reminding us of the vast, wild continent that shaped our nation’s culture. Lassen’s wilderness is here for your discovery, enjoyment, and inspiration today. With your help, it will be here to inspire you and others for many generations to come. Take some time to explore your park and discover for yourself the meaning and importance of wilderness!

Why Wilderness?

In 1964, Congress passed the Wilderness Act, which established the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Act required federal agencies to set aside unspoiled areas and manage them to preserve natural processes and minimize human impacts. Passing the law was a way of recognizing that “wildness” is fundamental to the human spirit.

Wilderness helps maintain our planet’s health by preserving ecosystems and species diversity. They are laboratories for studying natural systems and serve as a benchmark for assessing human impacts in more developed areas. Wilderness offers a glimpse into a world untouched by the hectic demands of everyday life. It provides unique recreational experiences and opportunities for solitude and spiritual renewal.

6. Articles (Park Publications) – Shenandoah Resource Management Newsletter - Spring 2001, Shenandoah National Park

Go Wild With Shenandoah! - Laura Cheek, Education Specialist

Shenandoah has something that Yellowstone National Park does not have. Wilderness. Yellowstone is wild, you say? You certainly can find the qualities of wilderness there: opportunity for solitude, a sense of unknown, natural landscapes, and wild animals. Yet, Yellowstone does not hold the ultimate protection that our country can confer on our wild lands. In order for an area to be “secured for the American people of present and future generations” as “an enduring resource of wilderness,” it must be distinguished as congressionally designated wilderness (“Wilderness Act,” 1964). While Yellowstone has no designated wilderness, 40 percent of Shenandoah National Park holds such distinction. This is only one aspect that makes Shenandoah’s wilderness area amazing and unique.

This is the year to celebrate our wilderness area! Twenty-five years ago, October 20, 1976, the United States Congress designated nearly 80,000 acres of Shenandoah as a wilderness area, which placed Shenandoah in the National Wilderness Preservation System. In so doing, Congress protected not only the biophysical elements of the area (trillium, turkeys, and trout), but also the intangible elements (refuge for wild life, opportunity for renewal, chance to escape our hectic daily lives). The benefits transcend the wilderness boundary, for even if you never enter a wilderness area, you can still benefit through clean air and water, research, and by simply knowing that wilderness is there, as part of our society’s “geography of hope.” However, a wilderness area does not have to be pristine or untouched by humans. Congress recognized there was evidence of human impact on Shenandoah’s land, and that humans would continue to recreate in the wilderness area. Shenandoah has 175 miles of maintained trails in wilderness, and evidence of the many families who made their homes here in the past. Wilderness areas protect these cultural resources for continued exploration and celebration by future generations.

Shenandoah’s wilderness education program is particularly promoting our wilderness this year. Look for celebratory programs throughout the Park. There will be wilderness presentations offered this summer by interpretive rangers, and wilderness messages in Park newspapers, brochures, posters, and displays. In this third and final year of NRPP (Natural Resource Protection Program) grant funding, we can document some of our past successes. Last year we presented wilderness programs to over 80 employees, 490 Park visitors, and 1,000 local and national audiences. This year we expect the numbers to grow. Shenandoah has become a national leader in wilderness education and will continue to be a role model for other national parks with wilderness areas.

Celebrate 25 years of Shenandoah’s designated wilderness! Explore your wilderness through hiking, seeking solitude, adventuring in the unknown, joining a ranger program, or appreciating from afar. While exploring, please take care to ensure that the benefits of our resource of wilderness will indeed endure for future generations. Go wild with Shenandoah! We have much to celebrate!

To find out more about Shenandoah’s wilderness area, visit www.nps.gov/shen/home. For more information on national wilderness areas, visit www.wilderness.net.

A WILD Idea...

Where can you find wilderness in Shenandoah National Park? Look on a park map. Gaze from an overlook along Skyline Drive. At almost 80,000 acres, Shenandoah National Park's wilderness area is one of the largest in the Eastern United States and is a part of our country's National Wilderness Preservation System.

*What is this wilderness you see?
How can it be described?*

We can easily describe the physical attributes of wilderness—natural sounds, no roads—but wilderness is more than that. Stating the height and hair color of your friend doesn't describe your friend's character. Similarly, explaining wilderness as a place of clean water and wild animals doesn't describe wilderness character. Wilderness is difficult to define.

Wilderness is an American idea, evolving from our unique frontier history. As wild land diminished in the late 1800s, American citizens spoke up to preserve natural areas. Pressure from development continued. In 1964, the U.S. Congress passed a law that gives the strongest protection possible to selected areas of our public lands—The Wilderness Act. The Wilderness Act defines wilderness as an area "in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man." "Untrammeled" means "unrestricted, unfettered, unconfined."

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In the word "untrammeled," the character of wilderness takes shape. The word connects our American heritage and our hope for the future to how we manage wild lands in the present. Nature is unrestrained, yet human actions are carefully thought through in order to maintain a sense of wildness.

Wilderness areas preserve not only a place, but an experience. There are opportunities for physical challenge and spiritual renewal, solitude and hope. In wilderness we can escape from our complex daily lives and sense our place in the natural world. Even when we simply go to the edge of wilderness and look in, wilderness provides reassurance that there are still areas in our country left to be wild.

As you hike a trail in wilderness, sit by a clear wild stream, or gaze over a wilderness area from Skyline Drive, look beyond the physical. There is more to wilderness than meets the eye. Think about the effect wilderness has on you, and the effect you have on wilderness. Contemplate the character of wilderness.

Wilderness areas are remnants of our American natural and cultural heritage that we preserve for future generations. As you explore wilderness in Shenandoah National Park, you share the experience of an American vision.



As You Visit, Leave No Trace!



Some of Shenandoah's most popular hiking spots are also home to some of Virginia's rarest plants. Many visitors are unaware of these special plants and can unknowingly damage them. Rare and endangered plant species are another reason why every park visitor should be familiar with the principles of Leave No Trace.

Leave No Trace is an outdoor national education program that works to teach outdoor enthusiasts how to enjoy the resources without harming them. By following seven simple principles, you can help preserve the park you came to enjoy. Whether you "Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces" to avoid trampling sensitive vegetation or "Respect Wildlife," the principles of Leave No Trace can help protect you and nature.

- Plan Ahead and Prepare.**
Know and follow park regulations.
- Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces.**
Stay on trails to avoid damaging fragile vegetation.
- Dispose of waste properly.**
Properly dispose of all trash, including biodegradable material.
- Leave What You Find.**
All plants, animals, rocks, and artifacts are protected. Leave them as you find them.
- Minimize Campfire Impacts.**
Fires are allowed only in pre-constructed fire grates at campgrounds, picnic areas, and day-use shelters.
- Respect Wildlife.**
Observe wildlife from a distance. Keep park wildlife healthy by not feeding them.
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors.**
Excessive noise, unleashed pets, and damaged surroundings take away from everyone's experience.

Additional information about LEAVE NO TRACE can be found at www.LNT.org

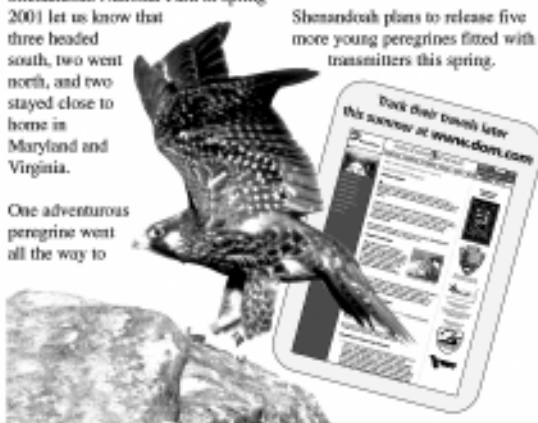
What a Trip!

FalconTrak, a multi-partner project, tracks the travels of newly released peregrine falcons. Through the project, scientists hope to learn more about this elusive bird of prey. Tiny satellite transmitters fitted on falcons released in several areas including Shenandoah National Park in spring 2001 let us know that three headed south, two went north, and two stayed close to home in Maryland and Virginia.

One adventurous peregrine went all the way to

the Dominican Republic for the winter. And what a commute! This peregrine left the Outer Banks of North Carolina and flew straight through to the Bahamas in less than 12 hours—that's 720 miles at about 60 miles per hour!

Shenandoah plans to release five more young peregrines fitted with transmitters this spring.



Go Wild! A Wilderness Challenge - Laura Cheek, Education Specialist

The Shenandoah
EXPLORER

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GO WILD! A Wilderness Challenge

We want to hear from you! Shenandoah National Park wilderness celebrates its 26th anniversary this fall, and we need help from your students with a wilderness exhibit. We want to know what you think about wilderness, so much so that we will send you a "thank you" package when we receive your response!

People have differing definitions of wilderness, using words such as "solitude," "great expanses," and "absence of people." Some will say they can find wilderness in Big Meadows at Shenandoah National Park, others only in Alaska. Actually, there is wilderness in Shenandoah! 40% of the park has been designated as wilderness by U.S. Congress. Congress defines wilderness as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man is a visitor who does not remain." The reason Congress felt the need to create a system to preserve wilderness areas is stated in the first paragraph of the Wilderness Act: "In order to assure that an increasing population,

accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States...., it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."

That is what Congress thinks about wilderness.

Now, here is the challenge: We want to know what your students think about wilderness. What would you expect to see or experience in Shenandoah's wilderness areas? Share your answer in poems, drawings, songs, or writing. Please send your responses to:

Laura Cheek, Education Office
Shenandoah National Park
3655 US HWY 211 E
Luray VA 22835

by October 11, 2002. We will display your responses in park visitor centers during **Wilderness Weekend, October 19-20**, and we will send your class wilderness materials to display in your classroom. ■

Thanks for your time and energy! Be wild, and be safe!



Call of the Wild, Wilderness in Shenandoah - Laura Cheek, Education Specialist

Shenandoah Overlook

Call of the Wild!

Wilderness in Shenandoah

What does the call of the wild sound like? Is it cascading waterfalls or the resonating caw of a raven circling a cliff top? What does the wild look like? Smell like? How do you imagine Shenandoah's wilderness? The wilderness calls to you to explore.

Approximately 4% of U.S. land is federally designated wilderness. Over 40% of Shenandoah National Park is wilderness - that's almost 80,000 acres!

You may consider Shenandoah National Park entirely wilderness. Many places within the park have a sense of wildness, from Big Meadows to the Appalachian Trail. Yet there is a distinct area within Shenandoah that has the title "wilderness" by Congressional designation. It fits the definition in the Wilderness Act, passed in 1964: "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man is a visitor who does not remain." To preserve the wilderness character of this area, Shenandoah manages it—maintaining trails and conducting field research—with minimal human interference.

While Shenandoah's wilderness is by definition natural, it takes human action to preserve it as such. People in the past heard the call of the wild and worked to preserve wilderness areas permanently through law. "Our expansive civilization...will eventually modify for human exploitation every last area on earth—except those that through

human foresight and wisdom have been deliberately set aside for preservation." Howard Zahniser, a resident of the Washington, D.C., suburbs, devoted much of his life to setting the vision of "a wilderness-forever future" into law. The

primary author and promoter of the Wilderness Act, Zahniser included Shenandoah National Park in the first draft of the Wilderness Bill as public land that should be considered for wilderness status. Even though in the final Act Shenandoah did not appear, voices locally and nationally continued to speak for designated wilderness in Shenandoah. Twelve years after the Wilderness Act was signed, and 31 years after

almost every state in America.

How can you experience Shenandoah's wilderness? Hike along a forest trail, carefully meander through the intertwining mountain laurel thickets, contemplate a view from a towering cliff or the edge of an overlook. Many of the views from Skyline Drive overlook a wilderness area. It may be difficult to distinguish between the undeveloped backcountry and the designated wilderness from overlooks and along trails. The trails may be narrower, with larger fallen trees to scramble over. However, the main difference defies your eyes, for it is in the level of protection.

The wilderness area is preserved with another layer of protection, so that the wilderness character will persist for future generations. Your grandchildren will be able to experience the cascading streams in Jeremics Run, the expansive vista of wilderness from Blackrock, the clear water and natural solitude in Big Run. They will be able to search for an outstanding view of Old Rag, solitary and majestic, a vision of designated wilderness. These enticing glimpses of wilderness await you, and those who will come after you, at overlooks, along trails, and from your car window as you gaze up at Shenandoah while driving through the valley.

Do you hear the call of the wild? Stop, listen, and experience wilderness in Shenandoah. When you connect with wilderness, you have the opportunity to abandon hectic schedules and mechanical conveniences. You are left with your own senses, your own resourcefulness. You experience wilderness on its terms, with human humility. And you may join the ranks of visionaries who preserved wilderness, as a place and experience, for future

"We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope."
- Wallace Stegner

generations. People who devoted their lives to protecting wilderness have passed the responsibility on to you. The continued preservation of wilderness is in your hands.

If you are inspired to learn more about experiencing Shenandoah's wilderness, please visit the new exhibit at Dickey Ridge Visitor Center. If you are planning a hike on a wilderness trail, please check with a park ranger for current information on safety and trail conditions.



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6. Articles (Park Publications) – Employee Newsletter - Yosemite National Park

Wilderness Daily Reports - Gary Koy

Wilderness Daily Report No. 1

Wilderness - The other 95%

In 1964 the Wilderness Act passed the United States Congress by a vote of 374 to 1 (the one dissenting vote said it just didn't go far enough to protect wilderness!). In 1983 The California Wilderness Act designated 704,624 acres or 94.45% of Yosemite National Park as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

What does this mean? Congress, through the Wilderness Act, has mandated the Executive Branch of Government (the President, to the Secretary of the Interior, to the Director of the National Park Service, to the Superintendent, to Park Staff) to "...secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."

How is this done, who does it, and what does it all mean? Watch the Daily for regular installments of interesting information about Wilderness and the people who work in it.

Wilderness Daily Report No. 2

Wilderness - The other 95%

"An area of Wilderness is further defined to mean...an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character...managed to preserve its natural conditions and which...has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive unconfined type of recreation;"

—The Wilderness Act

Last year, 49,924 people made the decision to leave the trappings of modern society behind, obtain a wilderness permit, and experience the primeval character of the Yosemite Wilderness. Despite an overall drop in park visitation, this is a 3% increase in wilderness use from the previous year.

Could it be that wilderness travelers have different motivations than the general park visitor? According to a survey of wilderness users conducted in the summer of 2001 by Peter Neuman of the University of Vermont, almost half (46 %) of the respondents had made 4 or more previous overnight trips to the Yosemite Wilderness. Seventy percent were from California and interestingly, 42% were over the age of 40. The Yosemite Wilderness has a dedicated and faithful following willing to expend extra effort in the quest for solitude or a primitive, unconfined, recreational experience.

"These mountain wildernesses may not be used by numbers of people in anywise commensurate with those who will throng the highways, but their individual service will be immeasurably greater. And as time goes on interest in outdoor America widens and deepens, their use will surely increase. It is not a matter of providing one type of recreation to the exclusion of the other. We need both, and we can have both."

—William Greeley, Chief of US Forest Service, 1927.

Watch the Daily for regular installments of interesting information about Wilderness and the people who work in it.

Wilderness Daily Report No. 3

Wilderness - The other 95%

"Trails...are determined to be necessary for resource protection and/or for providing for visitor use for the purpose of wilderness."

—NPS Wilderness Preservation and Management Policies, 2001

What would it cost to build Yosemite's 800-mile trail system today? Don't ask. Rest assured that park trail crews are working diligently to make sure we never have to find out. It is much cheaper to maintain a trail than to build a new one. Each summer 70 Yosemite trails staff, supplemented by crews from the California

Conservation Corps (CCC) the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), and the Student Conservation Association (SCA), accomplish comprehensive maintenance on about 200 miles of trail. Up to a dozen packers and 70 head of stock haul the 400,000 pounds of supplies and gear that are needed each summer to support the trail crews working in the remote Yosemite Wilderness.

And what about the 1997 flood? It wiped out valley campgrounds, right? But, what did it do to trails? Twenty-seven bridge spans had to be replaced and most trails below 7,500 feet needed major repairs. The bridges have been replaced but the extra trail work caused by the flood continues.

Trail work can be tough and it can be challenging. Trail work can be coarse pick and shovel work, it can be technical design work, and it can be intricate stonemason and bridge work. It involves skills born from years of tradition and dedication. Ninety percent of the trail crew got their start as young adults working for the California Conservation Corps' Backcountry Trails Program (<http://www.ccc.ca.gov/ccweb/SPECIAL/BACKCNTY/bcp.htm>).

"The design and level of maintenance a trail receives is more important to resource protection than the level of use the trail receives."

—Tim Ludington – General Foreman, R&T

(Bill Thomas is the Yosemite YCC Program Coordinator; Tammie Power, in the volunteer office, is the contact for CCC and SCA information.)

Watch the Daily for regular installments of interesting information about Wilderness and the people who work in it.

Wilderness Daily Report No. 2

Wilderness - The other 95%

"In furtherance of the purposes of the Wilderness Act the following lands [the Yosemite Wilderness and others]...are hereby designated as wilderness, and therefore, as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System."

—The 1983 California Wilderness Act

What is the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS)? Facts, just the wilderness facts:

- The National Wilderness Preservation System consists of 106 million acres of congressionally designated wilderness. (Approximately 4% of the US land mass)
- 56 % of NWPS is in Alaska (15% of Alaska).
- Of the 48 million acres of wilderness in the lower 48 states, 42 million acres are in the 11 Western States.
- The National Park Service manages 44 million acres or 41.7 % of the National Wilderness Preservation System (USFS – 32.8 %, USFWS – 19.5%, BLM – 6.1%).
- 13.3 % of California (14 million acres) is designated wilderness, the largest percentage in the lower 48.

"Without enough wilderness America will change. Democracy, with its myriad personalities and increasing sophistication, must be fibered and vitalized by the regular contact with outdoor growths—animals, trees, sun warmth, and free skies—or it will dwindle and pale."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Watch the Daily for regular installments of interesting information about Wilderness and the people who work in it.

7. Articles (Non-NPS Publications) – Holbrook Tribune - Oct. 19, 2001, Petrified Forest National Park

Wilderness: A Place Apart - Pat Thompson, Park Ranger

In 1970, 50,260 acres of high desert/grasslands in Petrified Forest National Park were set aside as designated wilderness, a place apart. This acreage joined a roster of more than 100 million acres, or approximately three percent of the nation's public lands, to be preserved in perpetuity as wilderness.

What is wilderness? According to the Wilderness Act of 1964, "wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

In reality, wilderness is a whole lot more. It is not just a physical location, but a state of mind and a place of the heart.

Humankind's understanding and use of wilderness have changed greatly over time. In early Judeo-Christian tradition, wilderness was believed to be a place of punishment for misdeeds or a place to prove oneself worthy of God. (Jesus' temptations occurred in the wilderness of Judea, according to Gospel accounts.) Wilderness was something to endure and then to leave behind.

Early European settlers to this country found the vast unbroken wilderness a barrier to movement and prosperity. Wilderness, which constituted some 98 percent of the country, was something to be feared and conquered. The settlers would remain, but they would change the wilderness so much that it would no longer be recognizable as wilderness. The settlers were highly successful at taming the land. Forests were cut, Native Americans subdued, resources were used up, animals and ecosystems disappeared or were greatly altered, and the wilderness area shrank to less than three percent of the country.

As wilderness areas disappeared, Americans began to realize the importance of the wild places they had impacted. Wilderness became important in its own right, a part of the unique American character. What is it about wilderness that makes it so special and why should great pains be taken to preserve it?

Today people recognize wilderness areas as destinations for pilgrimages, not places of banishment or conquest. Noted naturalist John Muir described the essence of wilderness as freedom, solitude and beauty. Wilderness creates opportunity for escape from the routine of daily life. People have chances to engage in both physical and mental challenges which renew and refresh. By preserving wilderness, this generation gives a precious gift to future generations.

Area residents can find wilderness right out their back door in Petrified Forest National Park. A large part of this wilderness can be accessed from a trail behind the historic Painted Desert Inn. After descending the trail from the parking lot, traces of man fade away, and one is free to follow heart and mind into the soft red and white clay hills.

If the hills could talk, they would tell the story of ancient times, people, plants and animals. For those who dare to venture further, the trappings of daily life are left behind, and freedom and solitude reign supreme. Quiet envelops everything. No phones, no cars, no radios, none of the many annoying distractions of daily life are to be found here. Come to the park to experience this for yourself.

Wilderness is a national resource, which the human soul cannot do without.



In 1964, Congress passed the Wilderness Act, which defined **wilderness** as "... an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." Today there are congressionally designated wilderness areas nationwide, including 80,000 acres in Shenandoah.

Wilderness areas provide refuge for wildlife and solace for humans. In the wild we can find inspiration, solitude, education and recreation. Whether by

the edge of a stream or at a mountain vista, we are a part of the natural world.

Even if you never enter a wilderness area, you will still reap the benefits of its existence. Clean springs feed water into local reservoirs and rivers reaching all the way to Chesapeake Bay. Scientific studies provide information on ecosystems relating to areas close to your home.

Shenandoah's wilderness is an experience as well as a place. While you explore the park, please keep in mind the importance of our "enduring resource."

A problem specific to Big Meadows is that of water. The wetland area of Big Meadows is one of the few high-elevation swamps in Virginia and is home to certain plants and animals that are rarely found elsewhere in the state. However, in the past 10 years, water usage in the Big Meadows area has doubled from 6 million gallons per year to more than 12 million gallons per year.

Occasional drought periods have further complicated the problem. Please follow a few simple practices to help conserve water in the park.

- Take short showers instead of baths.
- Turn off faucets while washing dishes, washing your face and hands, or brushing your teeth.
- Report stuck valves or dripping faucets to park service or concession employees.



Water usage in certain areas is skyrocketing. Please follow the park rules for maintaining healthy, adequate water resources.

Tom Till



Part of preserving Shenandoah is adhering to regulations and guidelines when participating in park activities.

Most resource managers now recognize that fire is a naturally occurring phenomenon that has a place in a healthy ecosystem. The Table Mountain pine, for example, needs fire to release seeds that will grow into new trees from its pinecones. For that reason and many others, the NPS staff occasionally use prescribed burns to maintain the vitality of forests and meadow areas.

Uncontrolled fires, however, represent one of the biggest threats to preserving Shenandoah's natural and cultural resources. In spring and fall, the park is especially vulnerable to the negative effects of human-caused fires. For more information, see "Park Regulations" on page 12.

LEAVE NO TRACE

Our love of and desire to experience wild places are ultimately changing them. As park visitation increases every year, how can we lessen our impact on the land we care about? One way is to "leave no trace." A national education program, **Leave No Trace** (www.lnt.org) is a response to the growing use of wild lands that promotes and inspires responsible outdoor recreation. Even if it is impossible to leave absolutely no trace of our presence, there are ways of minimizing our impact. The program's guiding principles are:

- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors

If you are planning an overnight trip into the backcountry or wilderness, be sure to obtain a permit and know the park's backcountry camping regulations, which are based on Leave No Trace principles and philosophy. These principles also apply to campgrounds, along the Skyline Drive, and even in your own backyard.

Look for the **Leave No Trace** symbol in Shenandoah. Think about leaving no trace as you stop at an overlook, walk the Lumberlost Trail or camp at Big Meadows Campground. We need your help – and you can make a difference.



